

RENEW Wisconsin: City of Madison awards grants to four community organizations to install solar arrays

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Madison, WI - This year's recipients of the MadiSUN Backyard Solar grants were announced Wednesday by the City of Madison and RENEW Wisconsin, a renewable energy advocacy organization.

Four grants totaling \$40,000 were awarded to three Madison nonprofit organizations and one affordable housing developer:

- Movin' Out, an affordable housing developer, was awarded a \$10,000 grant to construct a 124-kilowatt solar system on their new housing facility.
- Habitat for Humanity of Dane County, an affordable housing provider, was awarded a \$10,000 grant for a 30-kilowatt project at their administrative building.
- Bethel Lutheran Church, a house of worship providing clothing donations and a drive-up food pantry, was awarded a \$10,000 grant to build a 47-kilowatt array.
- An additional nonprofit organization has chosen to remain anonymous at this time.

In 2019, the City's successful MadiSUN Solar Program was expanded to incorporate the Backyard Solar grants. The grants are meant to increase solar adoption and access to solar power across the City.

"With these Backyard Solar grants, we are helping the organizations that help others," said Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway. "While they are working on affordable housing, workforce development, and supplying food and clothing to those in need,

these grants will help lower their energy bills.”

The Backyard Solar program incentivizes nonprofit organizations and affordable housing providers to install solar electric systems on their facilities. Grants cover up to 20% of the cost of a new solar array and offset upfront costs for solar installations in the City’s underserved communities.

“This grant is huge for us,” said Adam Helt-Baldwin, Construction Director at Habitat for Humanity of Dane County. “The investment in renewable energy will help us save on our monthly utility costs, allowing us to focus more resources directly toward our mission. It’s a win/win opportunity where environmental and financial sustainability go hand in hand.”

The four Backyard Solar projects will create nearly \$550,000 of local investments in renewable energy.

“The Backyard Solar program helps our community organizations save money, reinvest in their missions, and sustain local jobs here in the City of Madison,” said RENEW Wisconsin Executive Director Heather Allen.

Approximately 550 kilowatts of solar generation will be leveraged through the 2019 and 2020 Backyard Solar projects. The output from these installations should equal what 100 Madison homes typically consume.

“Everyone deserves to benefit from clean energy,” Allen said. “This program helps more people in our community access solar energy.”